



Dedan Kimathi, 1920-1957

The Armed People

The practical alternative to the State that appeared in Paris in the beginning of 1871 was not only the right of recall, and the whole people collectively in power and in perpetual session. It was also the reappearance of the Armed People in a new kind of societal framework. So-called Primitive Communism is an Armed People. Here, in the Paris Commune, was an Armed People in advanced productive circumstances.

The security forces - army and police - that had existed before

the Paris Commune had been paid to support the bourgeois State and to guarantee the State's survival by suppressing, whenever necessary, the working class. Under the Commune, these forces were disbanded and not replaced. With hardly any exceptions, all "separations of powers" were abolished in the Paris Commune, leaving only one power: The Armed People.

In Chile, in the time of the Popular Unity government that fell on 11 September 1973, instead of an Armed People, a virtue was made of disarmament, and a "Peaceful Path" was worshipped as the new political Golden Calf.

Volodia Teitelboim, in the document attached, and linked below, gives a brief description, as one of those who was involved, of Chile's Popular Unity government and its disastrous end at the hands of traitor fascists who used the national army to overthrow it. It was a shocking reminder of the purpose of the "special bodies of armed men" of the bourgeois state.

Teitelboim calls for "A Reappraisal of the Issue of the Army," meaning a return to the view of the Paris Commune, which Teitelboim mentions in the first line. This document is a sufficient basis for a very good and necessary discussion.

Like the Chilean Popular Unity government, ours is a multiclass government underpinned by a class alliance for common goals. It is a unity-in-action, otherwise called a popular front.

Why have we in South Africa survived after 21 years, while the Chileans did not survive after only 1,000 days?

The answer could be that we are not pacifists. Or, the answer could be that our crisis has not arrived yet. Or, that we have passed at least one crisis (e.g. in mid-2008, resolved by the recall of President Mbeki and the resignation of various ministers including Terror Lekota and Mluleki George), which may not yet be the last.

The next featured text will be the ANC's original Strategy and Tactics document of 1969. It unashamedly embraces armed struggle, and not any starry "Peaceful Path". South Africans were in this case in advance of the historic crisis that manifested in Chile. Four years prior to the Pinochet coup in Chile overthrew the Popular Unity government led by Salvador Allende, the Morogoro Conference of the ANC had laid down the necessity for the armed defence of the revolution.

Picture: There are very few photographs of freedom fighters in formation or in action to be found on the Internet, whether of MK or any of any other liberation army; but there are many photographs of freedom fighters in captivity. Full justice has not yet been done. The picture is of a statue of Dedan Kimathi under the blue sky of Kenya. AMANDLA! UHURU!

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [1,000 Days of Popular Unity Rule in Chile, 1977, Teitelboim.](#)
- To download any of the CU courses in PDF files [please click here.](#)